

BADN CALLS FOR RECOGNITION OF DENTAL NURSES' CONTRIBUTION TO DENTISTRY

The British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) supports the British Society of Dental Hygiene and Therapy (BSDHT) campaign for dental nursing support for hygienists and therapists in clinical practice. The BADN says that this does, however, raise the question of the number of Registered Dental Nurses necessary to provide such support – and why, despite several thousand student dental nurses qualifying and registering every year, a similar number fail to re-register each July and leave the profession.

BADN President Jacqui Elsdén said: 'The recent pandemic has served to highlight why there are currently insufficient dental nurses in the UK. Although NHS and mixed practices received their NHS funding as normal – and a condition of that funding was that they continued to pay their staff as normal – many refused to pay their dental nurses in full, leaving them with little or no income.'

'Despite requests from BADN to waive or lower the annual retention fee (ARF), or to allow monthly payments to ease the financial burden on dental nurses in particular, the GDC refused to recognise the dire financial plight of the largest registrant group and insisted on full payment of £114 by 31 July. This has led to more than 3,500 dental nurses

failing to re-register – having had no income since March, many of them just can't afford to!

'In addition, dental nurses employed in NHS practices are not considered to be NHS employees and consequently are not afforded the same conditions and benefits as NHS employees. They are denied access to the NHS pension scheme, are not paid according to NHS salary scales but instead are often paid just minimum wage. Nor are they issued with NHS ID – and consequently were not recognised as key workers during the lockdown period.'

'Despite this, when the NHS called for volunteers to assist on the front line, dental nurses were, I understand, the largest registrant group to volunteer – a fact which has not been acknowledged or recognised by the NHS. Those dental nurses who did volunteer to assist the NHS during the crisis were unable to get their children into childcare, denied entry into early morning NHS-reserved supermarket openings, and refused access to the many special services offered to actual NHS employees during the crisis – because the NHS refused to acknowledge them and their contribution!

'Dental nurses are registered dental care professionals and must be recognised as such – by employers, by colleagues

and by the NHS. BADN are calling for all dental nurses in practice to be paid a salary which recognises not only their invaluable contribution to the dental team but also their training, knowledge and professionalism, as well as the financial outgoings required just to be allowed to work as a dental nurse – training costs, registration fees, indemnity cover and CPD costs – not just minimum wage.

'BADN are also calling upon the GDC to lower the ARF for dental nurses – or, at the very least, allow monthly payments in order to ease the financial burden; on the Chief Dental Officers of the four home nations to recognise and acknowledge the contribution of dental nurses, particularly over the last six months, and to require that NHS practices in receipt of NHS funding during the lockdown period pay their dental nurses their full salaries for that period or have their funding withdrawn; and on the NHS to accord to dental nurses working in NHS practices the same rights and benefits as NHS employees.

'We hope that other *bona fide* dental organisations, and the dental press, will support BADN in this.'

The BADN has sent their release to a host of dental organisations, associations and societies to request statements of support.

REMEMBERING JANET GOODWIN

It was with great sadness that the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) announced the death of Janet Goodwin at home in Blackpool on 28 September after a long battle with breast cancer.

Janet began working in dentistry in 1971, and worked in general practice, community, dental hospitals and further education, including roles as Nurse Manager at Leeds Dental Institute and Qualifications Manager at NEBDN, for whom she also volunteered as an examiner and as Chairman – only the second dental nurse to be Chair of NEBDN. She was also a Past President of the Oral Health Foundation, was the first dental nurse to be a member of the General Dental Council and a past Chair of its Standards Review Group, as well as a former Governing Body member of Nugent Care Charity in Liverpool, and a development manager for the Strategic Health Authority. She consulted

on management and educational projects with City & Guilds as Chief Examiner, and with Dental Team Qualification in the development and delivery of DCP programmes.

Janet was a long-time supporter of BADN, having received her 25+ years membership brooch at the 2018 National Dental Nursing Conference from President Hazel Coey, who described Janet as 'A true plain speaking lass, who raised the bar for all of us dental nurses, and fought for our true value to be recognised. She was always cheerful and had a cheeky sense of humour... always made us laugh! A true support and voice for dental nurses.'

Janet was also a recipient of the BADN Outstanding Contribution to Dental Nursing Award, a BADN Fellow and an Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK). Janet was an Affiliate of FGDP(UK) and had long served as a representative of the wider dental team, as a dedicated observer on



the Board and a contributor to many standing committees, as well as Chair of the DCP Committee.

BADN President Jacqui Elsdén said 'Janet will be greatly missed both in dental nursing and in dentistry at large. She was a great advocate for the dental nursing profession, particularly for dental nurse education, and for oral healthcare in this country. On behalf of all BADN members, I send our sincere condolences to her husband David and family.'